

**DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
AND CONSERVATION**
Forestry Division



STEVE BULLOCK, GOVERNOR

STATE OF MONTANA

PHONE: (406) 542-4300
FAX: (406) 542-4217

2705 SPURGIN ROAD
MISSOULA, MONTANA 59804

Scoping Notice:

October 14, 2020

The Forestry Division of the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) is proposing to award financial assistance to mitigate the risk from wildland fire to communities and residents in Montana. These funds are offered through the FY21 Western States Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Grant Program. Award recipients may include Lincoln County, Lake County Conservation District, Blackfoot Challenge, and Tri-County FireSafe Working Group.

Fire suppression efforts over the past century, coupled with past management practices and forest growth have led to hazardous fuel conditions in forests across Montana. Increased development in the wildland urban interface coupled with hazardous fuel loading has increased the risk of wildfire to communities, homes, and other highly valued resources and assets. Grant funds from this program support reducing hazardous fuel conditions on private lands to establish fire adapted communities and restore fire-adapted ecosystems in the wildland urban interface.

The purpose of the proposed FY21 Western States WUI Grant Program is to reduce wildfire risk by managing hazardous fuel conditions in the forest near the communities of: Polson in Lake County; Helena and Lincoln in Lewis and Clark County; Libby in Lincoln County; Bonner, Greenough, Ovando and Potomac in Missoula County; and Helmville in Powell County. Treatments will reduce the intensity and severity of wildland fires on private land by decreasing the probability of stand replacement crown fires by thinning, pruning, pile burning, and mechanical chipping of hazardous fuels. Treatment outcomes will result in forest conditions more likely to support lower intensity and severity surface fires, and reduce wildfire risk to individuals, communities and emergency response. Award recipients listed above, administer these grant funds directly to landowner recipients through project agreements as part of a cost-share incentive for reducing wildfire risk on private property.

The proposed action to award grant funding to recipients would contribute to the DNRC meeting goals and objectives identified in the 2020 Montana Forest Action Plan - www.montanaforestactionplan.org.

Wildfire risk reduction treatments are proposed on approximately 985 acres in the project areas. The proposed projects would be implemented in the spring of 2021 and completed by the end of 2023. The DNRC is in the scoping phase of the project environmental assessment so all acreages are preliminary estimates. The Montana DNRC invites comments and suggestions concerning this proposal from all interested parties. Please respond by end of business October 30th, 2020 to:

Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
Attn: Ashley Juran - 2705 Spurgin Road - Missoula, MT 59804
or: ashley.juran@mt.gov